



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2011

Contact: Robert Sauers

Phone: +93 (0) 794 858 501

Email: rsauers@usaid.gov

Afghanistan's First Cashmere Dehairing Facility Inaugurated

HIRAT, AFGHANISTAN | JULY 31, 2011 — Afghanistan's first cashmere de-hairing facility, inaugurated yesterday in Hirat, will significantly boost future Afghan cashmere exports. The Herati Cashmere and Skin Processing Plant will be able to process more than 400 kilograms of raw cashmere each day through its line of five de-hairers. Abdul Basir Hotak, owner of the processing plant, purchased the equipment with the assistance of USAID and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock.

Speaking at the event, USAID Senior Development Officer Jim Wright said, "The Herati Cashmere and Skin Processing Plant is a true success story of advancing the economy in Afghanistan, and serves as a model for many future Afghan entrepreneurs. The United States Government, through USAID, is committed to supporting the return of a thriving economy: one where the Government of Afghanistan and the private sector work hand-in-hand to realize this growth."

Currently, most of Afghanistan's cashmere leaves the country in a raw state, where it sells for \$35 per kilogram. With the new machines, the processed cashmere can now sell in foreign markets for \$120 per kilogram.

The Ministry of Agriculture and USAID have worked together to improve Afghanistan's cashmere industry, including the harvesting techniques training of more than 466,000 herders, agricultural depot staff, and traders. These interventions produced more than 1,000 metric tons of cashmere, which was subsequently harvested and exported.

Additionally, in 2010 and 2011, USAID helped to link Afghan cashmere traders with international cashmere buyers by supporting the traders' participation in USAID-organized international trade missions in Tajikistan, China, Hong Kong, and the United States on cashmere, fibers, and skins.

###

For more information about USAID's programs, please visit: <http://afghanistan.usaid.gov>

The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for nearly 50 years.



USAID on Facebook



USAID on Twitter



USAID on YouTube



USAID on Flickr